

TREASURY DEPARTMENT
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Samples taken as required by law from the record 1941 coinage of the United States Mints will be tested for fineness and weight Wednesday by the Annual Assay Commission, Mrs. Nellie Tayloe Ross, Director of the Mint, announced today.

A commission of eleven persons appointed by the President and three ex-officio members designated by statute will be convened by Mrs. Ross at the Philadelphia Mint. The Director reported to Secretary Morgenthau that 209,682 coins, selected at random under elaborate safeguards to insure fairness, are under seal at Philadelphia for the testing by the Commission, whose functions date back to the days of George Washington.

Coins from the Denver and San Francisco Mints were sent to Philadelphia under seal.

Members named by President Roosevelt to this year's Commission are: Clarence Powers, president of the Puritan Bank and Trust Company, Meriden, Conn.; Felix Boylan, vice-president, Modern Industrial Bank, New York City; Allen B. Endicott, member of the Board of Taxes, Atlantic City, N. J.; Mrs. Wayne Coy, Washington; Mrs. Kate M. Ladd, Far Hills, N. J.; William C. Dickerman, American Locomotive Company, New York City; S. Forrey Laucks, York Safe and Lock Company, York, Pa.; Ralph W. Smith, Chief of the Division of Weights and Measures, Bureau of Standards, Washington; Vernon L. Brown, Curator of the Chase National Bank Collection of Moneys of the World, Brooklyn, New York; Joseph Moss, attorney, of Philadelphia and Maurice C. Alperin, president of the Eastern Smelting and Refining Corporation, Boston.

The ex-officio members are Judge William H. Kirkpatrick of the United States District Court, Philadelphia; Preston Delano, Comptroller of the Currency, and Joseph Buford, assayer, United States Assay Office, New York.

The law requires that of each 2,000 silver coins minted, one be preserved under rigid safeguards for testing by the Commission. With nearly two billion coins produced by the United States Mints last year, the "take" for inspection is the greatest ever. The Commission will be organized in committees, and will take coins at random from the lots under seal, for careful weighing and assaying under their supervision.

Mr. Smith, of the Bureau of Standards, will take to Philadelphia, under seal, the official weights of the Philadelphia Mint, which have been tested by the Division of Weights and Measures.

Mint officials, checking back through musty reports, found only one "untoward" incident in the record of meetings since 1792. In 1801, the Capital was moved from Philadelphia to Washington just before time for the Assay Commission to meet at the Mint, taking along the ex-officio members. The meeting could not be held on the prescribed date, and Elias Boudinot, Director of the Mint, wrote an indignant letter to President John Adams, complaining that the public's confidence was being undermined, and that the depositors were clamoring for the coins retained for examination.

In those days, the Mint operated on a "custom" basis, taking in bullion from individuals and returning to them the corresponding coins. Thus the specimens retained for the annual assaying really belonged to the "customers" of the Mint.

Congress solved the impasse by providing for a meeting of the commission that year in April.